

# NEWS RELEASE

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## ***SBA Honors Emerging 200 Initiative Graduates - - Small Businesses Who Are Impacting New Orleans's Inner City***

**(New Orleans, Louisiana)** – The U.S. Small Business Administration will recognize 16 local small businesses on Monday, January 12, 2009 at a graduation ceremony in downtown New Orleans. The goal of the SBA Emerging 200 initiative, started last Spring, was to identify 200 inner-city businesses across the country that show a high potential for growth—and to provide them the network, resources and motivation required to build a sustainable business of size and scale within a designated inner-city geographic location.

New Orleans was selected to participate in the SBA's Emerging 200 Initiative (e200) and some 20 businesses signed up. SBA had selected Inner City Entrepreneurs to conduct the executive training aspect of SBA's Emerging 200 initiative, a jobs and growth stimulation effort targeting promising inner-city small businesses.

The CEOs and small business owners who will graduate from the program have produced a three-year strategic growth plan with benchmarks and performance targets. They were trained further to target their business strategies to accelerate growth, explore financing, diversify markets and expand their networking.

"We were very pleased, along with our co-sponsors, to bring Emerging 200 and its MBA-style environment and program, to small businesses in New Orleans," Mike Ricks, director of the SBA's New Orleans District Office, said. "We had a fantastic Class of 2008 and we appreciate their dedication to the program. We feel that each one of them will have a brighter future as a result of their participation, and that the economy of the New Orleans area will benefit as well."

The cornerstone of the e200 in New Orleans was an in-depth 80 hour educational program, which ran from June through December, 2008, focusing on topics such as organization management, growth strategies and management, market development, and strategic planning. Graduating businesses recognized for completing the program include:

- Auguillard Construction
- Balloons2Go, LLC
- Children's College, LLC
- "Citi-Approved" Thibodeaux Construction
- Compu-Cure of New Orleans
- Corsair Media Productions
- IPS of Louisiana Corporation
- JC Patin Group, LLC
- Madison Media Group
- Mini Shipping & Storage, LLC
- Miracle Cleaning Services
- Paint Pro Depot
- S.C.K. Trucking & General Construction
- Southern Services & Equipment, Inc.
- Sunset Marine
- Three Fold Consultants

## **New Orleans e200 Graduation**

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The selection of New Orleans as an e200 city was a prestigious one. There were 23 cities nationwide that applied to take part in this initiative. Along with New Orleans, other e200 cities chosen included Albuquerque, Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Memphis, Milwaukee, Des Moines, and Philadelphia.

Those partner organizations joining the SBA District Office in bringing e200 to New Orleans are:

- Asian American Chamber of Commerce
- Capital Access Project – Office of Recovery & Development Administration
- City of New Orleans
- Consumer Credit Counseling
- Dillard University CDC
- Good Work Network
- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Louisiana Minority Business Council
- Louisiana SBDC Network
- Louisiana Department of Economic Development
- New Orleans Downtown Development District
- New Orleans East Regional Business Park
- Operation HOPE
- Rainbow PUSH
- The New Orleans Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Urban League of Greater New Orleans

Participation in e200 was free to qualifying businesses. Criteria for participation included having been in business for a minimum of three years, \$400,000 or more in gross annual revenues, and a business location within the geographic boundaries defined by the SBA. Participation was limited to only 200 businesses nationwide.

For more information on the program, contact the SBA in New Orleans at (504) 589-2853 or e-mail: [Loretta.poree@sba.gov](mailto:Loretta.poree@sba.gov).

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